

REMARKS

In view of the following remarks and the foregoing amendments, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9, 13-16, 18, and 20 were pending at the time of this action, with Claims 1, 18, and 20 being independent. Claims 10-12, 17, 19, and 21 were previously cancelled. Claim 18 is amended to correct an informality. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-9, 13-16, 18, and 20 are currently pending.

35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph - Claims 1, 3, 5, 8, 18, 20

Claims 1, 3, 5, 8, 18, 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. The Office Action alleges that claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. In particular, the Office Action alleges that the "attribute name" is not defined in the specification because the specification fails to disclose what it actually is because it "may not form a name to identify an attribute" (office action: page 3).

However, the "attribute name" is clearly described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventors had possession of the claimed invention. For example, "attribute name 104" is clearly described in Fig. 2A (p.4, lines 24-31; p. 5, lines 1-7, 24-25), "attribute name 208" is clearly described in Fig. 2B (p. 6, lines 10-18), "attribute name 208" is clearly described in Fig. 2C (p. 6, lines 19-30), and other parts of the disclosure. In these embodiments, the description of the "attribute name" is not questionable in terms of what "may" or "may not" be described as in the Office Action (p. 3), but is clearly shown and described in these embodiments in such a way to one skilled in the relevant art.

Furthermore, in making the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, the Office Action alleges that one skilled in the art would understand that the "attribute name" would be the "equivalent to 'property' of Thurlow" (Office action: p. 4, paragraph 3; p. 21, paragraph 3).

Hence, the Office Action itself later acknowledges that one skilled in the art would indeed reasonably understand the "attribute name" as described and shown throughout the specification.

For at least these reasons, the rejection to claims 1, 3, 5, 8, 18, 20 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, should be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph - Claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 18, 20

Claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 18, 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. The Office Action alleges that claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. In particular, the Office Action alleges that the word "operator" is not defined in the specification because the specification fails to disclose what it actually is because it "may" or "may not include a logical or other form of operator" (office action: page 3).

However, the word "operator" is clearly described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventors had possession of the claimed invention. For example, the "operator 106" is clearly described in Fig. 2A (p.4, lines 24-31; p. 5, lines 1-7, 24-25), the "operator 106" is clearly described in Fig. 2C (p. 7, lines 1-26), and other parts of the disclosure (e.g., Fig. 3 shows and describes "operator 318", Fig. 4 shows and describes "operator 318"). In these embodiments, the description of the "operator" cannot be questionable in terms of what "may" or "may not" be described as in the Office Action (p. 3) since it is clearly shown and described in these embodiments in such a way to one skilled in the relevant art.

Furthermore, in making the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, the Office Action alleges that one skilled in the art would understand that the "operator" would be the "equivalent to 'comparison of' Thurlow" (Office action: p. 4, paragraph 3; p. 21, paragraph 3). Hence, the Office Action itself later acknowledges that one skilled in the art would indeed reasonably understand the word "operator" as described and shown throughout the specification.

For at least these reasons, the rejection to claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 18, 20 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, should be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. 102(b) - Claims 1-9, 13-16, 18, and 20

Claims 1-9, 13-16, 18, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Thurlow et al., U.S.P.N. 6,057,841 (hereinafter referred to as "Thurlow"). Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections because Thurlow does not disclose or suggest each and every feature of independent claims 1, 18 and 20.

Claim 1 recites a computer-implemented method that displays a graphical user interface (GUI) on a display device of a computer, where the GUI includes a representation of a condition and a representation of an action of a user-defined rule to process textual information. The condition includes an attribute name, an operator, and an attribute value, and the action includes an action name and an action value. The method also includes receiving, via the GUI, user input that indicates the user-defined rule is to be used to create a rule template and, in response, creating a rule template. The rule template has a condition that is based upon the condition of the user-defined rule and has an action that is based upon the action of the user-defined rule. The condition of the rule template includes, among other elements, an attribute-value placeholder that is associated with the attribute value from the corresponding condition of the user-defined rule. The action of the rule template further includes, among other elements, an action-value placeholder that is associated with the action value from the corresponding action of the user-defined rule. The method also includes receiving a second user input that indicates a value to be used in place of the attribute-value placeholder and a value to be used in place of the action-value placeholder, and, in response, creating and storing a second user-defined rule to process textual information. The second user-defined rule is based on the rule template and includes the value to be used in place of the attribute-value placeholder and a value to be used in place of the action-value placeholder. The method further recites using the second user-defined rule to process incoming textual information received from a customer system and triggering the action of the second user-defined rule when the incoming textual information satisfies the condition of

the second user-defined rule.

The Office Action asserts that Thurlow discloses all of the features of claim 1, and refers to col. 1:22-54, 2: 19:46, 3:22-32, 10:13-34, 10:64 through 11:25 and Fig. 6b for this disclosure. However, even assuming for the sake of response that this assertion is correct, Applicant submits that Thurlow does not disclose or properly suggest all of the features of claim 1. For example, Thurlow fails to disclose the features of "creating, in response to the received user input, a rule template having a condition that is based upon the condition of the user-defined rule," as recited in independent claim 1.

Instead, Thurlow discloses techniques for processing electronic messages by applying a rule representing a combination of additions, actions, or exceptions (Thurlow: Abstract). In particular, Thurlow discloses a method and system for creating and editing rules for electronic messages, such as for "OUTLOOK 97" by Microsoft Corporation of Redmond, Washington (Col. 3: lines 23-31). Thurlow discloses a "Rules Wizard" that "divides the process into discrete steps and provides a user-friendly interface for creating and editing rules," where "at each step the user selects the parameters that constitute the rule." (Thurlow: Col. 9, lines 18-35). Fig. 5 shows a state diagram for the various discrete, sequential steps used in the Rules Wizard to create a new rule or edit or rename an existing rule (Thurlow: Col. 10:48-63). These discrete, sequential steps are shown in the example diagrams of Figs. 6a, 6b, 6c, 7a, 7b, 7c, 8a, 8b, 8c, 9a, and 9b. However, none of these discrete, sequential steps in Thurlow show the claim features of "creating, in response to the received user input, a rule template having a condition that is based upon the condition of the user-defined rule," as recited in independent claim 1. These claim features are absent from Thurlow. Claim 1 is patentable over Thurlow for at least this reason alone.

Page 5 of Office Action pointed to Cols. 2:38-46 and 10:26-34 of Thurlow for allegedly disclosing this feature of claim 1. Thurlow discloses the following in the cited sections.

In another aspect, the present invention provides a method for constructing a rule for processing electronic messages. The method includes displaying a list of rule templates and receiving an input signal indicating the selection of one of the rule templates. A condition and action associated with the selected template are then displayed. The current state of the rule is displayed in a natural language format.

The rule is then stored for subsequent processing of electronic messages. Thurlow, 2:38-46.

The machine-readable format for each natural language action clause is of the form:

[ACTION] [PARAMETER 1] {PARAMETER 2} [...]
where ACTION is an identifier for the selected action and PARAMETER N is a parameter associated with the action. For example, the PARAMETER may be the identifier of the folder into which matching messages are to be filed. Thurlow, 10:26-34.

Hence, Thurlow does not disclose or even teach each and every feature of claim 1. For example, Thurlow does not disclose a user “creating ...a rule template,” as in claim 1. Instead, Thurlow discloses that a user views a displayed list of templates and selects one of the listed templates, as shown above (Thurlow: 2:38-46). The rule templates are pre-existing and pre-created before the user views the displayed list. Hence, Thurlow fails to disclose a method that includes “creating, in response to the received user input, a rule template having a condition that is based upon the condition of the user-defined rule.” Claim 1 is patentable over Thurlow for this reason alone.

Furthermore, Thurlow fails to disclose “creating, in response to the received user input, a rule template having a condition that is based upon the condition of the user-defined rule and an action that is based upon the action of the user-defined rule,” as recited in claim 1. So, not only does Thurlow fails to disclose a user creating a rule template, Thurlow further fails to disclose doing so based on selecting an existing rule. There is no disclosure of a rule template being created based upon an existing rule in Thurlow.

Instead, Thurlow discloses that a rule is created based upon selecting a displayed list of pre-existing rule templates (Thurlow: 2:38-46). “The rule is then stored for subsequent processing of electronic messages” (Thurlow, 2:44-46). Hence, Thurlow discloses that the rules themselves can be created from pre-existing templates and then stored for later use. However, Thurlow does not disclose that the templates themselves are created based on pre-existing rules and then subsequently stored for later use. This is another distinction that Thurlow fails to disclose or teach, for which claim 1 should be allowed.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and claims 4, 6 and 9, which depend from claim 1. Independent claims 18 and 20, although different in scope from claim 1 and each other, recite subject matter similar to that in claim 1 discussed above. In accordance with the above, Applicant submits that Thurlow does not disclose or properly suggest at least these features of independent claims 18 and 20, so that claims 18 and 20 are allowable for at least this reason.

In Conclusion

Applicant submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

It is believed that all of the pending issues have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this reply should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this reply, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.136, Applicant hereby petitions that the period for response to the action dated May 29, 2007, be extended for one month to and including September 29, 2007.

The fee in the amount of \$120.00 in payment of the one-month extension of time (\$120.00) is being paid concurrently herewith on the Electronic Filing System (EFS) by way of Deposit Account authorization. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

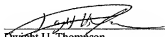
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Respectfully submitted,

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